

Congresswoman introduces bill for more high school counselors

Washington, DC –Today, Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez introduced the “Put School Counselors Where They’re Needed Act” (H.R. 667). This legislation would provide vital funding for high schools with high drop-out rates to hire additional counselors.

“We owe it to students at risk to provide them with the resources they need to graduate high school,” said Congresswoman Sánchez. **“It’s urgent that we place more counselors in high schools with high drop-out rates.□ We can’t afford to leave millions of children behind--without access to a quality education—if their high schools don’t have the money for enough school counselors. ”**

The “Put School Counselors Where They’re Needed Act” would set up a competitive grant program focused on high schools with graduation rates of 60% or lower. Selected schools could then hire additional school counselors and expand counselor resources. These additional counselors would work intensively with students at risk, and set up a plan with parents, teachers, and employers to get these students on track to graduate high school.

To prevent students at risk from falling through the cracks, the American School Counselor Association and the American Counseling Association both recommend a ratio of 250 students

per counselor, with a lower ratio regarding students at risk. However, in California's public schools, that average ratio is 900 students per counselor. With student populations between two and four thousand at many large Los Angeles-area high schools, additional personal attention and follow-up from professional counselors will help ensure our children don't miss out on a quality education.

“Seven thousand students drop out of high school every day,” continued Sánchez.
“Professional school counselors can spot potential problems in a student's academic career early on and address them before that student drops out of school because his or her problems are too overwhelming.”

The National PTA, the American School Counselor Association, and the American Counseling Association have all announced their support for Congresswoman Sanchez' “Put School Counselors Where They're Needed Act.”

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